

## VIDEO SYNOPSIS: Inpanh Thavonekham

### Introduction by Riki Saltzman

- :20 Riki Saltzman introduces herself as Folk Life Coordinator for the Iowa Arts Council Department of Cultural Affairs, part of state government. Ms. Saltzman and her staff work with individuals and communities to document, preserve, and present their traditions.
- :45 She describes presenting crafts, music, and dance as some of the traditions, at folk life festivals, on radio shows, and on two on-line folk life curricula.
- 1:04 Each of the five folk artists is briefly shown as Ms. Saltzman describes their craft or art.

### Inpanh Thavonekham (Thavonekham is pronounced *ta wun come*)

- 1:44 At the Wat Lao Buddhavath temple in Des Moines, Iowa, a man hits a large gong. Inpanh Thavonekham is shown next to large sculptures of dragons that he created for the temple. They are painted cement sculptures. He plays traditional Laos musical instruments. He holds up a phin [*peen*], a guitar-like instrument, with a dragon's head that he carved.
- 2:03 Mr. Thavonekham is shown in his home. There is an arrangement of instruments, and the narrator states that he makes instruments and carves wood. He learned his skills in Laos at the national art school there, and he carries on his traditions in Iowa.
- 2:31 Mr. Thavonekham shows a phin that he is working on, which is made in a different style. He shows a map of Laos and states that he lived in a refugee camp for six months. Then he came to Iowa, where he had a sponsor.
- 3:19 He opens a box of carving tools.
- 3:36 He shows the first phin that he made, which he made about seven years ago. No one taught him how to make it. He says that if he sees something, he can make it, because he knows how to draw. Mr. Thavonekham had attended art school in Laos, studying the basics, and drawing and sculpture. He demonstrates a Xor-ou [*so-ooo*], which he says is like a viola. He plays it by drawing a bow across its strings.
- 4:39 Mr. Thavonekham displays a khene [*ken*], the instrument he plays best. He demonstrates it, and then is shown playing it outside the temple.
- 5:04 A lanath [*la nat*] is shown at his home. This is an instrument like a xylophone, and he shows two cut-out wooden pieces that will form the ends of a stand that holds the instrument.
- 5:24 He plays the lanath. Then a group of musicians play Laotian music together as a large statue of the Buddha is carried in front of the musicians.
- 6:12 End of Inpanh Thavonekham section